

For the purpose of procuring fuel necessary for the navigation of the Mississippi river, and to facilitate transportation thereon, the following is *Ordered*:

1. Captain N. J. RUSCH, Assistant Quartermaster, is authorized to hire a force of laborers, not exceeding six thousand (6,000) men.

2. Quartermasters or other officers in charge of Government transportation, will, on the requisition of Captain Rusch, furnish transportation for persons employed by him in pursuance of this order.

3. Captain Rusch will take, as his field of operations, the banks of the Mississippi river, between the mouth of White river and Baton Rouge, and will then select such points as he may deem best, and proceed to organize his force of laborers in such manner as shall best serve the end contemplated by this order.

4. For the purpose of protecting the laborers employed under this order, Ordnance Officers at St. Louis, Missouri, or points on the Mississippi river below, will furnish Captain Rusch, on his requisition, approved by General ROBERT ALLEN, senior and supervising Quartermaster, (or by the Commanding Officer at Vicksburg,) all necessary arms and ordnance stores, taking his proper receipt therefor.

5. The Medical Department will also furnish all necessary medical supplies on like requisitions; and Quartermasters will also, on similar requisitions, furnish the necessary animals, wagons, axes, and other stores, and the Commissary rations; or Captain Rusch may purchase the same, where it may be impracticable to obtain them on requisition.

6. Within the limits mentioned in section 3 of this order, Captain Rusch will have the exclusive management and control of all wood required for Government purposes; and all existing contracts made by any Government officers will be transferred to him.

7. For all funds necessary to the execution of this order, Captain Rusch will make requisition upon General Robert Allen, senior and supervising Quartermaster of the Division of the Mississippi, and make regular monthly reports to him of his proceedings, besides rendering the usual monthly and quarterly returns prescribed by Regulations, to the Quartermaster General.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR:

E. D. TOWNSEND,

*Assistant Adjutant General.*

OFFICIAL: